hinterland connectivity is being improved, keeping in view the demands of maritime trade.

(b) RITES Limited, New Delhi, conducted a study and submitted its report captioned "Perspective Plan for India Port Sector Vision 2020" (Vision 2020 Report) in April, 2001, The main objectives of the study were as follows:

(i) Assess the Indian sea-borne traffic upto the year 2021-22, (25 years from the end of Eighth Five Year Plan)

(ii) Evaluation the optimum quantum of cargo that can be handled at the existing ports.

(iii) Suggest locations suitable for further port development considering the logistics of the cargo generated as also the land and water front features.

(iv) To bring out synergy between the port development plans of Major Port Trusts and State Governments.

Apart from the above, the concerned ports undertake studies of the projects on their own while executing the projects for capacity augmentation.

(c) As part of the process to improve productivity, efficiency and quality of service, private sector participation, including foreign direct investment is encouraged in development of major ports. Further, during recent years the major ports have been following proactive approach for fuller utilization of the infrastructure. Some of the major ports have established business development units to focus on marketing. The major ports also interact with the users for their suggestions regarding facilities upgradation, traffic rationalization, etc. Exploitation of market is, however, a dynamic process to which the ports respond taking into account the factors such as changing pattern of exports-imports, industrial development in hinterland, tariff in competing port etc.

Potential of Inland Water Transport

2544. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) what are the major ports in India having immense potential of

inland water transport in the form of riverine port having natural advantage in inland water transport and what is the quantum of it;

(b) whether there is a huge traffic congestion in the city adjoining the river due to inland water transport; and

(c) what are the measures conceived to avert the traffic congestion?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) Kolkata Port is the only riverine major port in the country. The volume of inland water traffic handled at the port was 4,60,000 tonnes during 2004-05.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Declaration of National Highways in Punjab

2545. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL : Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of highways in Punjab which have been delcared as National Highways under the Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plans and total length of National Highways till date; and

(b) the funds allocated for the upgradation and maintenance of the highways of Punjab under the Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA) : (a) During the Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plans Period, six numbers of State roads have been declared as National Highways, which are NH-64, NH-64 Extension NH-70, NH-71, NH-72 and NH-95.

Total length of National Highways in Punjab till date is 1739 Kms.

(b) The funds allocated for the upgradation and maintenance of National Highways in Punjab for the Ninth Five Year Plan is Rs. 272.04 crore and Rs. 88.76 crore respectively and the corresponding figures in the Tenth Five Year Plan is Rs. 270.31 crore and Rs. 86.59 crore respectively.